226 most difficult to ford. Each watercourse, or more exactly each pond, [423 belongs to a naba and bears a special name, so no river has the same name 558] name all along its course. During the dry season the lelek /bed?/ of the watercourses is usually dry. Here and there are to be found ponds of varying depth where the cattle is watered. These ponds are where the natives fish. They wait until the water level subsides to knee height, for otherwise fishing would be too difficult.

226 The fishing gear is as crude as the hunting gear. There is a small 227 net held open by three sticks forming a triangle and crossed by a tough stick that is held in the hand, quite similar to the spoon-nets we use to gather shrimp. Above all a sort of wicker trap is used, conical in shape, open at the base and closed at the tip with a movable lid. This trap sometimes contains a second one made of very flexible sticks that are attached to the base of the first one. The two traps thus have a common base, but the second one opens within the first. The fish enters the trap and is held by the sticks of the smaller cone, which close in as the fish tries to get out. The fisherman removes the trap from the water or leaves it sunk in the mud, opens the lid, plunges in his hand and removes the fish, which is confined and easy to seize. The fisherman then puts it in a net or in a leather bag.

226 On a set date the owner of the pond offers sacrifices to the crocodiles 825 so they will not bite anybody. This is why the naba of Koupéla, before he fishes in his pond, must sacrifice a black goat and a chicken. No one may kill a crocodile while fishing, or the naba will die before the year is over. Was not a crocodile killed in his father's pond on [789 the very year when he died? Before they go fishing, the natives make charms by burning roots and tree bark inside their traps. If the charm is good, the fish will rush headlong into the net or trap.

226 The fishermen gather at one end of the pond. They stand in a row across the water and move slowly forward while dipping their nets and traps over and over again. All the fish caught are put in bags or tossed to friends who stand on the shore, but, as during the hunt, the naba takes an ample share and seizes the finest specimens. The ponds hold mostly silurids anyway, which like mud and retain its odor and taste even when cooked. The Volta rivers, on the other hand, contain more abundant and more varied fish. /52/ When the natives have crossed and recrossed the pond several times, only small fry remain, and everyone goes home glad to have a little fish for the sauce and especially to have escaped the teeth of the crocodiles, for in spite of